



Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes - Draft

February 5, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Board Chair, Rebecca Bays, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at the Brooksville City Hall Council Chambers, 201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, Florida. The meeting was publicly noticed on the Hernando County, Citrus County, and Hernando-Citrus MPO websites.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rebecca Bays, Citrus County Commissioner
Diana Finegan, Citrus County Commissioner
John Allocco, Hernando County Commissioner
Steve Champion, Hernando County Commissioner
Jerry Campbell, Hernando County Commissioner
Ryan Amsler, MPO Board Alternate Member, Hernando County Commissioner
Gene Davis, Councilman, City of Inverness
Joe Meek, Mayor, City of Crystal River
Louis Hallal, Brooksville City Council
Elisa Joyner, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

Brian Hawkins, MPO Vice Chair, Hernando County Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT

Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
Suzanne Ziegler, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Loren Hughes, Florida Turnpike Enterprise

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

MPO Board & Staff Introductions

The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of the Board and staff followed the Invocation.

Enter Proof of Publication into the Record

A quorum was declared, and Ms. Turner noted for the record that the public notice for the meeting was posted in accordance with the adopted policies.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (Limited to Board and Staff)

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Amsler to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Meek and the motion passed 9-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Ryan Amsler
SECONDER:	Joe Meek
AYES:	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, Ryan Amsler, John Allocco, Louis Hallal, Diana Finegan, and Gene Davis
ABSENT:	Brian Hawkins

ANNUAL ELECTION OF MPO OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS

Annual Election of the 2026 Officers and Appointments for the Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board

[16974](#)

Hernando/Citrus MPO Board

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to elect Commissioner Allocco as the Hernando-Citrus MPO Board Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Finegan and the motion passed 9-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Councilman Davis to elect Commissioner Bays as the Hernando-Citrus MPO Board Vice Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Finegan and the motion passed 9-0.

MPO Committee Appointments

Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC)

Per the Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) agreement, the MPO Chair will serve as the SCTPA representative. Commissioner Allocco, as the MPO Chair for 2026, will be the SCTPA representative.

Motion: Commissioner Bays moved to serve as the 1st Alternate SCTPA Representative for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 9-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Campbell to ratify the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners' November 18, 2025, appointment of all five (5) commissioners as alternate liaisons to the SCTPA; and to ratify the Brooksville City Council's September 4, 2025, appointment of all five council members as alternate liaisons to the SCTPA. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and the motion passed 9-0.

Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Bays to elect Bob Esposito as representative for the TMA Leadership Group for 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hallal and the motion passed 9-0.

Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC)

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to elect Commissioner Hawkins as the representative for MPOAC for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Amsler and the motion passed 9-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Mayor Meek to elect Commissioner Bays as the 1st Alternate MPOAC Representative for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Finegan and the motion passed 9-0.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to ratify the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners' November 18, 2025, appointment of all five (5) commissioners as alternate liaisons to the MPOAC. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Campbell and the motion passed 9-0.

Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) and Citrus County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB)

The Hernando County Board of County Commissioners proffered John Allocco as Chair of the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board for 2026.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Finegan to ratify Commissioner Allocco as TDLCB Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 9-0.

The Citrus County Commission proffered Janet Barek as the Chair for the Citrus County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board for 2026.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Finegan to ratify Commissioner Barek as LCB Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bays and the motion passed 9-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Review and Approval of the November 6, 2025, Meeting Minutes of the [16968](#) Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board

Motion

A motion was made by Mayor Meek to approve the November 6, 2025, meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Amsler and the motion passed 9-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Joe Meek
SECONDER:	Ryan Amsler
AYES:	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, Ryan Amsler, John Allocco, Louis Hallal, Diana Finegan, and Gene Davis
ABSENT:	Brian Hawkins

CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Correspondence to Note Items

[16990](#)

Ms. Elwin provided an overview of the Correspondence to Note and Informational Items. Regarding Informational Item #2, the transfer of the “One-Way Pairs” roadway from the Florida Department of Transportation to the City of Brooksville, Commissioner Allocco sought confirmation that the intent remains to eliminate the one-way pairs and restore the roads to two-way, bidirectional traffic. Ms. Elwin confirmed that this is still moving forward.

ACTION ITEMS

Adoption of the Annual Safety Performance Measures Targets (Highway Safety, PM-1)

[16975](#)

Ms. Elwin reviewed the agenda item and the staff recommendation. Chair Allocco noted that counties with higher congestion and larger populations often have lower fatality numbers. He requested information on the speeds involved in fatalities in Hernando and Citrus counties, as both counties rank at the top despite having comparatively lower populations. Commissioner Champion agreed and discussed the positive role of roundabouts or crossovers when navigating four to six lanes of traffic.

Chair Allocco expressed interest in reviewing before-and-after crash data for the intersection of US 50/Cortez Boulevard and Evergreen Woods Trail following the installation of a traffic signal, as well as data for Culbreath Road and Ayers Road after the addition of a roundabout.

Commissioner Finnegan asked about the requirements for requesting a traffic signal at the intersection originally identified as West Oak Park Boulevard and US 98/W. Ponce de Leon Boulevard. *[After the meeting, it was determined that the location in question was S. Oak Village Boulevard and US 98, not West Oak Park Boulevard. Additionally, in a response received from FDOT on February 11, 2026, the intersection was reviewed and previously completed studies and crash data didn't indicate any increase in crashes or risk of crashes. Previous studies showed that a signal wasn't warranted based on volume or crashes. The area will be continually monitored for any crashes or volume increases.]*

Commissioner Bays inquired about the cost difference between a roundabout and a traffic signal. Chair Allocco explained that the cost varies depending on factors such as right-of-way ownership and utility locations, but that mechanically, a roundabout is significantly less expensive. A typical traffic signal costs approximately \$1,000,000. He added that in

higher-speed areas, a roundabout slows traffic and continues to operate during power outages. Mr. Champion felt the best option is to install right-turn only at the intersections. Ms. Elwin noted that the operational and maintenance costs of roundabouts are significantly less than traffic signals especially after weather events.

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Finegan to support the State’s Vision Zero safety targets but adopt the projected 2026 figures based upon a 1% reduction methodology from the prior five-year rolling average. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 9-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Diana Finegan
SECONDER:	Steve Champion
AYES:	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, Ryan Amsler, John Allocco, Louis Hallal, Diana Finegan, and Gene Davis
ABSENT:	Brian Hawkins

Reappointment of Member to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

[16972](#)

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Bays to reappoint Jim McLean to serve on the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee in the Citrus County Citizen-at-Large position for a period of two (2) years (February 5, 2026, through February 4, 2028). The motion was seconded by Mayor Meek and the motion passed 9-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Rebecca Bays
SECONDER:	Joe Meek
AYES:	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, Ryan Amsler, John Allocco, Louis Hallal, Diana Finegan, and Gene Davis
ABSENT:	Brian Hawkins

Reappointment of Member to the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB)

[17085](#)

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Campbell to reappoint Gerry Whitted to serve on the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) in the Citizen Advocate-Transit User as Primary Means position for a period of three (3) years (February 5, 2026, through February 4, 2029). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 9-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Jerry Campbell
SECONDER:	Steve Champion
AYES:	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, Ryan Amsler, John Allocco, Louis Hallal, Diana Finegan, and Gene Davis
ABSENT:	Brian Hawkins

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Based on his experience as a driver in Oregon and using multi-lane roundabouts, Mr. Mike Casey of Hernando County cautioned the Board about implementing multi-lane roundabouts in heavily congested traffic areas.

[It is noted for the record that MPO Board member, Citrus Commissioner Bays, stepped out of the meeting.]

MPO DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Ms. Elwin shared the following updates:

- The Board has been provided with a copy of the May 1, 2025, current adopted List of Priority Projects (LOPP). Work to review and update the 2026 LOPP is underway and will be sent to the MPO committees. The MPO is proposing the following approach:
 - Maintain the current list without expanding it, while identifying cost-feasible, smaller-scale improvements that can be advanced (e.g., turn signals, adding turn lanes, intersection improvements).
 - Move some larger, locally focused projects to a secondary list to position them for potential advancement if local and state funding becomes available.
 - Reduce the number of projects on the Transportation Alternative (TA) list by removing items that will unlikely be able to receive TA funding.

Chair Allocco asked whether there is a way to differentiate between non-motorized vehicle needs (such as trails) and sidewalks, particularly sidewalks leading to schools, in order to make the information more transparent to the public and easier to understand.

- The Hernando County Attorney is reviewing a draft Letter of Understanding (LOU) provided by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for County Line Road. The LOU will be presented to the Hernando County Board of County Commissioners. Chair Allocco asked whether there would be a point at which the MPO Board would need to approve the LOU, and Ms. Elwin confirmed that no MPO action is required because the LOU is strictly between Hernando County and FDOT. She added that if anything changes, MPO staff will update the MPO Board. Chair Allocco also reiterated the need for improvements along County Line Road, noting significant issues and failing conditions west of Mariner Road, which are not included in the current LOU, and emphasized the importance of getting that segment on everyone's radar.
- Ms. Elwin stated that Mr. Esposito would like to request that the reimbursement process for use of his personal vehicle be updated from the current "per-trip" method to a monthly submission process. At present, each trip (whether in a county vehicle or my

personal vehicle) requires a Travel Authorization form for the Chair's signature prior to travel, followed by an individual Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses. The use of the County vehicle is reimbursed at the same rate and in the same manner as a personal vehicle.

Mr. Esposito proposed to seek advance approval of the MPO Board to utilize his personal vehicle in lieu of the County vehicle for meetings, trips, or conferences when such use is efficient in time and cost for the MPO. Then on a monthly basis, the required Voucher for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses would be completed and accompanied by the supporting documents for the trips for meetings, conferences, etc. As customary, the Chair's signature is required prior to submitting the Voucher for Reimbursement form to the Hernando County Clerk for reimbursement.

The consensus of the Board was to place this matter as a separate agenda item at the next meeting and to have a Resolution reviewed by the County Attorney. The Board also requested clarification regarding any insurance implications should an accident occur while using a personal vehicle for official business, as compared to using a county vehicle.

- Work has begun on the new two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which will outline MPO projects and activities for FY2027-FY2028.
- Traffic counts and level-of-service analysis for both Citrus and Hernando are in progress.
- Mr. Esposito attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting on Wednesday, January 28, in Orlando.
- Ms. Elwin and Mr. Esposito participated in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting on Thursday, January 29, in Orlando, which was well attended by Florida MPOs.
- The Centralia Road Interchange Study being conducted by Florida Turnpike Enterprises is expected to be available at the end of April.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Councilman Hallal shared constituent concerns from Southern Hills regarding truck traffic exiting the community onto US 41 and crossing multiple lanes of traffic to make a left turn. He asked whether large truck traffic could be required to turn right onto US 41 and use a more appropriate U-turn location farther down the roadway. Because Southern Hills is located within the City of Brooksville, it was suggested that Councilman Hallal consult with the City Attorney regarding the legality of imposing such a restriction specifically on large trucks.
- Mayor Meek reported that the City of Crystal River will be working with Citrus County on intersection improvements at N Turkey Oak Drive and CR 495/N Citrus Avenue. He noted that the City may seek assistance and guidance from the MPO Board and the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), particularly as the Suncoast Parkway is adding an exit at CR 495 within the next two to three years. As plans progress, Mayor Meek will provide updates to the MPO Board.

UPCOMING MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board is scheduled for Thursday, March 5, 2026, beginning at 1:30 pm, in the Brooksville City Hall Council

Chambers, 201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, Florida.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Allocco adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.